

WEST DES MOINES PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD PROCEEDINGS
Thursday, May 8, 2014

The meeting of the West Des Moines Parks and Recreation Advisory Board was called to order on Thursday, May 8, 2014, at 5:30 p.m. by Vice-Chair, Forrest Ridgway.

Commission	Heather Schebel	Rick Swalwell	Forrest Ridgway	Mike Chambers	Joe Hrdlicka
Present	X		X	X	X

Staff	Susan Mathews <i>Parks & Recreation Administrative Secretary</i>	Sally Ortgies <i>Superintendent of Parks</i>	Greg Hansen <i>Superintendent of Recreation</i>	Gary Scott <i>Director of Parks & Recreation</i>	Ryan Jacobson <i>Deputy City Clerk</i>
Present		X	X		X

On Item 1. Approval of Agenda

Schebel moved to approve the agenda as presented. Chambers seconded. Motion carried.

On Item 2. Citizen Forum

No items.

On Item 3. Approval of Minutes of April 17, 2014 Meeting

Ridgway stated that staff identified and corrected “Thursday” in the header of the minutes.

Chambers moved to approve the minutes as previously amended. Schebel seconded. Motion carried.

On Item 4. Old Business

No items.

Public Hearing:

On Item 5A. Woodland Hills Park Site Plan

Vice-Chair Ridgway indicated this was the time and place for a public hearing to consider the Woodland Hills Park Site Plan, initiated by the City of West Des Moines. He asked for the date the notice was published and the Superintendent of Parks indicated the notice was published on May 2, 2014, in the Des Moines Register. Ridgway asked if any written comments had been received. The Superintendent of Parks stated none had been received. Ridgway indicated that a short overview of the plan would be presented prior to public comment.

David Sadler, City of West Des Moines Landscape Architect, stated that Woodland Hills Park will be the 20th neighborhood park in West Des Moines. Sadler provided maps of the park location, development area and master plan. He added that the park amenities will include: playground equipment, open play areas, a playfield with backstop, multi-use courts for tennis and basketball, a multi-use trail with network connections, picnic shelter and restroom. Sadler presented sample images of typical amenities.

Ridgway asked for public comments from the audience.

Duane Sundo, 9510 Prairie Court. Sundo inquired if it would be possible to put money toward expanding the tennis or basketball courts instead of playground equipment due to existing equipment at

the adjacent school. Sundo asked about the parking lot lighting and potential interference with the cul-de-sac. Sundo indicated that his question about working to preserve the trees in the greenway was addressed in the presentation. Sundo inquired about the timeframe for the proposed trail.

Sadler responded that similar playground joint-use agreements with Waukee Schools exist at Brookview and Maple Grove Parks. He added that the playground equipment and their uses are very different. Ortgies added that schools don't install equipment for 2-5 year olds, so the City provides that. She noted that families with children of different age groups like to have equipment nearby. Ortgies also emphasized the benefits for parents of younger children to be able to utilize the park equipment during the school day when the school equipment is busy. Sadler showed a grading plan map to address the parking lot lighting. He noted that berms and landscaping will be used to screen the parking lot. He indicated that the parking lot will be lighted with one or two downcast streetlights. Ortgies added that the City uses typical Mid-American streetlights. Sadler spoke about trees and indicated that no grading will occur under the drip line of the existing large tree. He added that a few trees will need to be removed from the greenway to provide for stormwater detention but most of the larger ones will not be impacted. Sadler showed the map of the proposed future trail that will tie into the Sugar Creek Greenway trail. He indicated that the curb cuts were installed when the street was paved but the timing is currently unknown. He shared that the timeframe is based on funding and public demand. Ortgies added that more than likely the trail piece in question would not be installed until the Sugar Creek Greenway is complete.

Kevin Biggs, 1430 S. 93rd. Biggs stated he and his family bought a lot and built a home to be close to the school. He added that Oppidan indicated they had paid for all the trails and were just waiting for City to put them in. Biggs also expressed a concern with construction traffic access to the park since Sugar Creek Drive is the only access. He asked if there are any plans to extend Stagecoach for an alternative route. Biggs also asked for information about a rumor of negotiations to move the cell tower.

Sadler responded that Oppidan's agreement with the City was to pave sections of sidewalks and trails along street right of way. He added that the long greenway sections which are connections between streets were not a part of their agreement. Ortgies added that Oppidan also contributed some funds for development of the park. Sadler indicated that traffic access to the development is a known issue and there are negotiations with a landowner to the east of the Woodland Hills development that would potentially add access. He added that Oppidan is working on another development which may also allow eventual access to Cascade Avenue. Sadler stated that the cell tower agreement is for a specific number of years and that there would be no truth to a rumor about it moving in the near future.

Jerry Parker, 1133 S. 95th. Parker shared support of this project. Parker asked if the playground equipment would be accessible for children with disabilities. He inquired if the tennis and basketball courts would be lighted. Parker asked about the surface to be used on the loop trail and if any water sprays would be installed.

Sadler responded that both playgrounds will be fully ADA accessible. Sadler noted that courts are not typically lighted in neighborhood parks. He added that loop trail surfacing is generally asphalt, which joggers give feedback as being easier on the knees, but that trails and sidewalks in the right-of-way will be concrete. He stated that a sprayground has not been proposed for the park due to the high cost and the significant draw for people outside of the neighborhood. He added that spraygrounds exist at Raccoon River and American Legion Parks which are larger. Ortgies added that a neighborhood park is intended to primarily serve the neighborhood.

Lori Nebel, 1029 S. 95th. Nebel stated that her realtor assured her that the timber behind her property was going to stay but it has since been taken out. She asked who could address why that was done. She added that her son enjoys playing at the school playground and basketball court and that he is excited about the park playground. She offered thanks for the proposal.

Sadler responded that the timber area where trees were removed is not related to the park. He added that the land is owned by a developer who is bringing in a cul-de-sac off Stagecoach which takes out a lot of the trees. Hrdlicka asked who questions about the development could be directed to. Sadler replied the City's Development Services Department would be the contact. Jerry Parker added that the Planning & Zoning Commission is discussing the cul-de-sac next Wednesday and a recommendation will go to the City Council the following week. He added that he has called the developer and will be meeting with them Tuesday to get a better idea of what the plans are. Nebel asked if there is any way to prevent animals from using the park. Ortgies responded that there is no ordinance that prohibits dogs in parks, but that they must be on leash. She added that City Code requires dog owners to pick up after their dogs and that if they do not they are breaking a law, while it is hard to enforce. Ortgies added that the playground won't utilize sand so it does not tend to be an issue on playgrounds but in grass areas it can be a problem at times. In areas where it becomes a problem, we've put up signs as a reminder.

Carla Olson, 1335 S. 93rd. Olson stated it is great to see the park happening and asked about a timeframe for the park's development.

Sadler responded that the site plan is just beginning to go through the formal approval process. The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board will recommend to the Planning and Zoning Commission who will recommend to the City Council for approval. The hope is that this summer the project will be bid for grading along with stormwater, sanitary sewer and water connections. Sadler hoped that the site would be seeded this fall and that the additional funding from Oppidan may either provide the parking lot or part of playground to be installed next year. Remaining phases will be subject to the annual budgeting process. Ridgway suggested residents encourage City Council to allocate funding to this project.

Hearing no other comments, Vice-Chair Ridgway declared the public hearing closed.

Hrdlicka expressed appreciation for people coming. He added that he lives close to a similar park layout in a neighborhood which was going through the same type of development 10-15 years ago. Hrdlicka noted the benefits of the park as his children grew up and used the many different amenities.

Hrdlicka moved to approve the Woodland Hills Park Site Plan and to recommend approval by the Planning and Zoning Commission. Chambers seconded. Motion carried.

New Business:

On Item 6A. Motion – Approval of Recommendation to City Council – Grand Avenue Trail

Ortgies stated that the Board has been asked to review the location of the Grand Avenue Trail as it exists on the Master Parks and Trails Plan. Ortgies added that currently the trail is proposed on the north side of Grand from Jordan Creek to S. 50th Street where it would cross, at grade at the signalized intersection, then continue to the underpass under the I-35 ramps. A Councilmember is suggesting it stay on the north side until just east of S. 35th Street, then an underpass would be constructed to go under Grand Avenue and come up along the south side. The cost of an underpass is estimated at about \$320,000. Ortgies noted that the City Council is interested in hearing what the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board thinks. Ridgway stated he doesn't see the logic in it but suggested there must be a reason for the suggestion. Ortgies responded that she was not at the Public Works Council Committee when it was discussed.

Ridgway suggested that the majority of the trail traffic will be coming from the north where many residences are located and that it doesn't seem logical for people to cross Grand to access the trail. He added that it also seems like spending \$320,000 for more difficult and dangerous access to the trail. Hrdlicka agreed that he would like to know the rationale for the change. Schebel added that she would much prefer an underpass at the entrance to Raccoon River Park so the trail users would have safe access to the park. Ortgies responded that would be great but that an underpass in that location would not work logistically due to the grade. She added that a signalized intersection is planned and that even before that the option of a pedestrian activated HAWK signal could be considered to get people safely across. Ridgway asked about the transition at 50th Street. Sadler responded that the interstate underpasses on both ramps are being built on the south side and existing trail sections west of the interstate are on the south side. He noted that since the 50th Street intersection is signalized it's a logical point to cross. Chambers shared he doesn't think an additional underpass is worth the expense. Sadler stated that most of our underpasses are installed where greenway trails need to pass under major roadways at mid-block locations. Otherwise, it is more cost efficient to create the crossing at a signalized intersection. Long-range plans for vehicle and pedestrian/bicycle crossing over the Raccoon River were also discussed.

Chambers moved to keep the Grand Avenue Trail as currently shown on the Master Parks and Trails Plan. Schebel seconded. Motion carried.

On Item 6B. Motion – Establishment of Special Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meetings – Ice Cream Socials:

1. July 17, 2014 – 6:30 p.m. – Huston Ridge Park
2. July 31, 2014 – 6:30 p.m. – American Legion Park

Ortgies noted that the regularly scheduled Park Board meeting on July 17 will take place at Huston Ridge Park at 5:30 p.m. prior to the Ice Cream Social in the event there are necessary action items, otherwise the July meeting will be canceled.

Hrdlicka moved to establish Special Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meetings for Ice Cream Socials on July 17, 2014 at 6:30 p.m., Huston Ridge Park and July 31, 2014 at 6:30 p.m., American Legion Park. Chambers seconded. Motion carried.

On Item 6C. Motion – Appointment of Bicycle Task Force Member

Ridgway noted that two Park Board members are serving on the Bicycle Task Force. Ridgway will continue to serve but Swalwell is not able to, so a new member is needed. The meetings take place once per month for approximately one hour, continuing the next six months. Hrdlicka expressed interest in serving.

Chambers moved to appoint Hrdlicka as the new member to the Bicycle Task Force. Schebel seconded. Motion carried.

Staff Reports:

On Item 7A. Superintendent of Parks

Ortgies reported that bids were taken on the Holiday Park Youth baseball field improvement project. The bids came in under estimate and the project is moving forward following City Council approval. Bids also came in under estimate on the Grand Avenue Trail and the concrete trail renovation projects. Ortgies met with Police Chief LaDue to discuss beach patrol. For new Board members, three years ago there were some major issues at the beach including underage drinking and fighting. Families and young children were beginning to stop using the beach. City Council provided some funding for Police

Department overtime to create a beach patrol and the increased police presence helped bring the situation under control quickly. The last two summers the patrol has been used but it is getting harder to get officers scheduled due to so many opportunities for overtime. This year the focus will be on Thursday through Sunday from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. and daily from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Additionally, the on-duty officer for territory one will spend more time in the park, including parking their car, getting out and walking the beach. Ridgway stated it has been a night and day difference, it is a place for family fun once again. Ortgies added that contract security has also been increased. The overtime arrangement will be reevaluated in July but setting the example early in the season makes a difference. The department is supportive of strict enforcement, including writing tickets. Schebel asked if a signal for entrance into Raccoon River Park is a part of the Grand Avenue trail project. Ortgies stated it is not. She added that if that's something Board members would like to see they should contact Deputy Director of Public Works, Joe Cory, or members of the Bicycle Advisory Commission to let them know it's a priority.

On Item 7B. Superintendent of Recreation

Hansen noted that staff is gearing up for opening of pools. He noted a few key calendar items: Family Fun Night in Valley Junction on May 15, the Raccoon River Park Archery Facility Grand Opening on May 20, and the Art on the Campus Grand Opening on May 22.

On Item 8. Other Matters

Hrdlicka thanked staff for providing a park tour which was very educational.

Receive, File and/or Refer:

On Item 9A. City Council Communications

April 21, 2014 – Proclamation – Arbor Day – April 25, 2014

April 21, 2014 – Resolution – Order Construction and Notice of Public Hearing on Plans, Specifications, Form of Contract, Estimate of Cost, and Direct Advertisement of Bids – Grand Avenue Trail – Raccoon River Park to Fuller Road

May 5, 2014 – Proclamation – Bike Month – May 2014

May 5, 2014 – Public Hearing – 2014 Concrete Trail Renovation: 1. Resolution – Approval of Plans and Specifications; 2. Motion – Receive and File Report of Bids; 3. Resolution – Approve Contract

May 5, 2014 – Public Hearing – Holiday Park Baseball Field Improvements – Phases 1 and 2: 1. Resolution – Approval of Plans and Specifications; 2. Motion – Receive and File Report of Bids; 3. Resolution – Approve Contract

Chambers moved to adjourn the meeting. Hrdlicka seconded. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Mathews
Administrative Secretary

ATTEST:

Heather Schebel
Advisory Board Secretary